DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 186 SP 036 795

TITLE	Ohio's Career Enhancement Pilot Projects.
INSTITUTION	Ohio State Legislative Office of Education Oversight, Columbus.
PUB DATE	Oct 94
NOTE	33p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Legislative Office of Education Oversight, 30 East Broad Street, 27th Floor, Columbus, OH 43266-0927.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Career Development; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Development; Inservice Teacher Education; Instructional Improvement; Merit Pay; *Peer Evaluation; Pilot Projects; Public School Teachers; State Programs; Statewide Planning; Teacher Improvement; *Teacher Promotion
IDENTIFIERS	*Ohio

ABSTRACT

This report on an evaluation of Ohio state-funded career enhancement pilot programs cover six school districts. Four kinds of programs are covered: (1) career ladder--teachers are promoted through a series of steps based on different levels of competence and responsibility; (2) career option--teachers take on and are compensated for defined responsibilities related to the classroom, but increases in pay last only as long as participation does; (3) shared governance--school-level decision making is shared by administrators, teachers, parents, and community members; and (4) merit pay--bonuses or pay increases are awarded to teachers who have performed particularly well. In five of the six districts there is a peer review process that uses teachers rather than administrators to evaluate and coach one another. Study findings indicated that classroom changes resulting from career enhancement activities increased students' opportunities to learn, and that the most promising career enhancement strategies programs were peer review and targeted staff development. Recommendations based on the findings include: (1) allow all districts who want career enhancement to compete for grant funds; (2) incorporate peer review and staff development targeting individual districts' needs into statewide professional development initiatives; and (3) address the design and implementation flaws of the merit pay pilot program. Survey questions are appended. (Contains 41 references.) (ND)

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Ohio's Career Enhancement Pilot Projects

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The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) serves as staff to the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight. Created by the General Assembly in 1989, the Office evaluates education-related activities funded wholly or in part by the state of Ohio.

Since 1987, the career enhancement line item has allocated funds for pilot programs in six school districts. As the line item's name, "Career Enhancement," implies, these programs are intended to enhance the career of teaching, and by doing so, improve the quality of educational experiences and performances of students. This report examines these state-funded career ladder and peer review pilot programs for teachers. ***Conclusions and recommendations in this report are those of the LOEO staff and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Committee or its members.***

SUMMARY

OHIO'S CAREER ENHANCEMENT PILOT PROJECTS

The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) examined state-funded career enhancement pilot programs and found them to be an effective means of improving the quality of teachers in participating districts. Most problems with career enhancement programs were caused by conflicts between individuals or difficulties with program implementation, rather than program design.

Since 1987, the career enhancement line item in the state budget has allocated funds for pilot projects in six school districts. As the line item's name, "Career Enhancement," implies, these programs are intended to enhance the career of teaching, and by doing so, improve the quality of educational experiences and performances of students. Traditionally, teachers receive increases in pay based on total years of service and completion of college coursework. Outstanding performance in the classroom is minimally recognized, and most opportunities for advancement require teachers to leave the classroom permanently.

State funds assisted six districts with career enhancement pilot projects, each of which developed its own program.

LOEO evaluated the pilot programs in: Arlington Local, Berea City, Cincinnati City, Cleveland City, Columbus City, and Toledo City school districts. Each district was required to match the designated state funds with local funds. Amounts distributed to individual districts varied. In fiscal year 1993, the districts received amounts ranging from $33,000 to $281,850.

Each of the districts developed its own program. As a result, money from the career enhancement line item has funded several kinds of pilot programs: career ladder, career option, merit pay, and shared governance. A career ladder program promotes participating teachers through a series of steps based on different levels of competence and responsibility. A career option program allows teachers to take on defined responsibilities related to the classroom; teachers are compensated for participating, but increases in pay last only as long as the participation does. Shared governance activities promote school-level decision making, shared by administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. A merit pay system awards bonuses or pay increases to teachers who have performed particularly well.

In five of the six districts there is a peer review process that uses teachers, rather than administrators, to evaluate and coach one another. Peer review processes are applied to all new teachers, as well as to assist experienced teachers identified as needing improvement. Career ladder programs use peer review to make decisions about advancement.

LOEO concluded that classroom changes resulting from career enhancement activities increased students' opportunities to learn.

Career enhancement programs are intended to produce changes in teachers and thus bring about changes in student learning. LOEO concluded that career enhancement activities in the classroom increased students' opportunities to learn. This study found that:

- Career enhancement pilot programs have demonstrated success by benefiting participating teachers and their students.

- Advantages brought by these programs include developing new skills for teachers to use in the classroom, providing the best teachers an incentive to remain in the district, and compelling ineffective teachers, including some experienced teachers with tenure, to leave the profession. High-performing teachers were rewarded with increased salaries, and in most cases, with increased responsibility, status, or respect. Teachers assumed leadership roles that were once solely administrative, such as evaluation and personnel decisions. Education reform efforts were enhanced by this professionalization of teachers' careers, which included increased accountability and collaboration among teachers, administrators, and the teachers' unions.

- Disadvantages resulted from the way the program was implemented in a specific district rather than inherent problems in the program itself. Disadvantages, such as personality clashes, administrative problems, and jealousy resulted from the interaction of individuals.

The most promising strategies used by career enhancement programs were peer review and targeted staff development.

- The most promising strategies used by career enhancement programs were peer review and targeted staff development. The peer review process was identified as effectively removing the worst teachers from the classroom. Peer review provided opportunities for teachers to evaluate and assist one another. Staff development targeted to specific needs of a district's teachers allowed them to acquire new skills to help their students learn.

- The merit pay program gave its better teachers an incentive to stay in the district by rewarding them for good evaluation scores with an increase in pay. However, the merit pay pilot program did not include activities to improve the skills of participants or a way to remove the least effective teachers. Its criteria for pay increases were subjective, and results of participants' evaluations did not remain confidential. These attributes detracted from the value of this pilot program.

Based on the findings of this study, LOEO recommends that:

LOEO recommends that the General Assembly allow districts that wish to develop career enhancement programs to apply for two-year development or start-up funds.

- The General Assembly allow all districts who want career enhancement programs to compete for grant funds. The success of six different programs has shown that career enhancement can be advantageous to participating districts. There is no need to continue testing the concepts of career enhancement in pilot projects. Districts with existing career enhancement programs and districts that wish to develop new ones should compete for line item funds.

  ODE would develop guidelines for distributing funds, based on financial need and the potential of proposed programs to affect both students and teachers. Districts would be strongly encouraged to include peer review and targeted staff development components in their plans. In addition, each plan would be required to include regular self-evaluation of both the program's implementation and results.

- The Ohio Department of Education incorporate peer review and staff development targeting individual districts' needs into any statewide professional development plan it initiates. Those activities should continue where they exist, and be incorporated into future professional development activities of other districts.

- School districts that wish to use merit pay programs address the design and implementation flaws of the pilot program. Redesign should ensure that the program's evaluation and reward process is objective and there are program activities to help teachers improve.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Since 1987, the career enhancement line item has allocated funds for pilot programs in six school districts. As the line item's name, "Career Enhancement," implies, these programs are intended to enhance the career of teaching, and by doing so, improve the quality of educational experiences and performances of students. This report examines these state-funded career ladder and peer review pilot programs for teachers.

LOEO examined state-funded career enhancement pilot programs, and overall found them to be an effective means of improving the quality of teachers in participating districts. In general, the programs provided incentives for the best teachers to remain in the districts' classrooms and increased the skills of participating teachers. Peer review processes, in which teachers are evaluated and assisted by outstanding experienced teachers instead of administrators, resulted in the removal of the least effective teachers from the classroom. When there were problems with career enhancement, they were caused by conflicts between individuals or difficulties with the implementation of a program, rather than its design.

Each of the six districts developed its own program. As a result, money from the career enhancement line item has funded several kinds of programs: career ladder, career option, merit pay, and shared governance. In five of the six districts there is a peer review process; the sixth district's merit pay program does not include peer review activities.

The Ohio Administrative Code requires the Division of School Finance of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to conduct an annual onsite review to determine program effectiveness. This rule was adopted in 1990. However, according to staff at ODE, no onsite reviews have been conducted. Originally, ODE planned to evaluate career enhancement programs as part of school district reviews that occur once every five years. The school district review process was discontinued in 1991, and to date ODE has not conducted a systematic evaluation of the career enhancement programs.

All programs have a governing board at the local level responsible for annual evaluations, and all districts have evaluated their programs locally in some fashion. The structure and thoroughness of these evaluations varies, however.

SCOPE AND METHODS

Amended Substitute House Bill 152 required LOEO to evaluate career ladder and peer review programs. The act states:

> The Legislative Office of Education Oversight shall evaluate the use of peer review and career ladder programs in improving instructional performance and shall report to the chairman of the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight by September 1, 1994, concerning the relative advantages and disadvantages in implementing such programs.

Because the line item now called "career ladders" has funded several types of career enhancement programs, LOEO's study included all programs funded by the line item.

Scope

LOEO reviewed programs in the six school districts currently receiving state funds from the Career Ladders line item. Although other districts in the state may carry out similar activities, LOEO did not review their programs.

This report addresses three issues:

- How did the use of state-funded career enhancement programs affect instructional performance?
- What were the advantages and disadvantages of implementing these programs?
- What role did peer review play in career enhancement programs?

LOEO looked for changes in teachers' activities, and resulting changes in the classroom for both teachers and students. LOEO identified advantages and disadvantages occurring across the different types of programs. Included within our examination was the contribution of each program to school reform efforts. As we answered the first two questions, LOEO explored advantages and disadvantages of peer review, and sought links between it and changes in instructional performance.

Methods

LOEO staff reviewed the research literature concerning career ladders, career options, merit pay, shared governance, peer review, and related activities. (Bibliography is found in Appendix A.) We made several computer network inquiries and contacted participants in career ladder programs of several states. LOEO staff interviewed Ohio Department of Education personnel.

To collect information for this study, LOEO interviewed a total of 21 local superintendents, other administrators, and union officials in participating districts. We also surveyed principals and teachers in those districts. (Survey questions are found in Appendix B.)

We included nonparticipants in our sample to learn their opinions about the effects of career enhancement programs on the school, the district, and students other than those in participants' classrooms. LOEO anticipated that 68 surveys would be returned; we received 50. Of those 50, only six came from nonparticipants.

CHAPTER II
DESCRIPTION OF CAREER ENHANCEMENT

This chapter describes the history of Ohio's career enhancement activities. Since a 1984 education reform initiative first recommended that career enhancement and peer review programs be established in Ohio, the state has funded programs in six districts. These programs were based on education research regarding the use of career enhancement to professionalize teaching and improve schools. A brief overview of each district's program illustrates how the district designed its own program to meet its specific needs.

HISTORY

Traditionally, a classroom teacher's role changed little throughout her career. Teachers assumed leadership roles in their own schools and at the district level by participating in union activity, or serving as department chairs and members of advisory and governing committees. Professional advancement usually required leaving the classroom to assume administrative duties.

Although the state has a minimum salary schedule for teachers, each district determines how far above the minimum its salary schedule will be. In most districts, a teacher's salary depends more on total years of employment and education than achievement or performance in the classroom. To earn more, a teacher must either leave that district, or leave the classroom altogether. Thus, some districts often lose their best teachers.

In the early 1980s, education research suggested that changes in the organization of schools and the roles of teachers would improve schooling. Furthermore, research found that the most effective initiatives were those developed locally with input from teachers. Teachers were to have more say in decisions that affected the classroom and more opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. A teacher in this setting would be able to advance professionally without leaving the classroom. For example, an experienced teacher might be paired with a new teacher and spend some school time in the new teacher's classroom, observing and helping. Or, the experienced teacher could be encouraged to create a series of inservice staff development sessions for all the teachers in the building, and be compensated for doing so.

In 1984, the State Board of Education adopted a reform effort, the Master Plan of Excellence, which recommended establishing career enhancement and peer review. A grant from the U.S. Department of Education allowed the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and Miami University to conduct a feasibility study, which was completed in June 1987.

The legislature provided funding for pilot projects in Toledo and Columbus during the 1987-1989 biennium. In June 1989, ODE was authorized to develop and submit a plan to the General Assembly by December 1990 for phasing in career enhancement programs statewide. Between 1987 and 1991, each state budget included a line item that identified districts that would receive funds for their career enhancement activities.

In the 1989-1991 and 1991-1993 biennia, funds were designated to assist seven districts

with career enhancement pilot programs: Arlington Local, Berea City, Cincinnati City, Cleveland City, Columbus City, Felicity-Franklin Local, and Toledo City. Felicity-Franklin did not accept these funds. Because it was a small rural district, administrators felt that it did not have resources to replace state funding when the pilot project ended. Each district was required to match the designated state funds with local funds. Amounts distributed to individual districts varied. In fiscal year 1993, the six districts received amounts ranging from $33,000 to $281,850.

Amended Substitute House Bill 152 appropriated approximately $1.1 million for career ladder programs for each year of the 1993-1995 biennium. However, language allocating these funds differed from that of its predecessors. The name of the line item changed from "Career Enhancement Programs" to "Career Ladders." Am. Sub. H.B. 152 did not specify districts to receive funds, but said that ODE could distribute funds to districts with existing programs that had used previous grants effectively. According to ODE, fiscal year 1994 funds were distributed upon review of program descriptions and available local evaluations. The criterion used to determine if a district received funds was whether the reported program activities conformed to a district's stated intentions.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

The Ohio Department of Education submitted Ohio's Plan for Phasing in Career Ladders to the General Assembly in December 1990. This study suggested that the state could most effectively promote career enhancement by providing assistance for districts to develop local incentive programs. The plan describes existing programs of Toledo, Columbus, and Arlington, and suggests that to create a career enhancement program a district could follow one of these models or create something completely different. It used studies of other career enhancement programs to develop 11 components districts should include when creating any new career enhancement plan. ODE would approve any new district career enhancement programs prior to funding.

Ohio's Plan for Phasing in Career Ladders states, "the mission of Ohio's career enhancement programs is to improve the quality of educational experiences and performances of students, and to enhance the career of teaching." It describes three models of career enhancement programs: career ladder, career option, and merit pay. Each district's program was designed to meet its unique needs. Location, size, and composition of each district affected the development of its particular career enhancement activities. For example, the large number of teachers in the Cleveland City School District made the cost of including more than a few teachers in a career ladder program prohibitively high; that district chose to use career enhancement funds for its shared governance program.

Exhibit I illustrates the kind of program each district chose to meet its needs.

EXHIBIT I
OHIO'S CAREER ENHANCEMENT PILOT PROGRAMS

Programs with Peer Review Activities in the District			No Peer Review
Career Ladder	**Career Option**	**Shared Governance**	**Merit Pay**
Cincinnati	Berea	Cleveland	Arlington
Toledo	Columbus		

Career Ladder

A career ladder program promotes teachers through a series of steps based on different levels of competence and responsibility. As career ladder teachers' responsibilities increase beyond those of nonparticipants, they are promoted from step to step, and their pay levels rise above those of the district salary schedule.

Toledo. Toledo uses a career ladder program to provide incentives to recruit and retain quality teachers. The career ladder contains six phases. During the first two phases, interested teachers undergo intense evaluation, including being observed and evaluated by their peers, while performing their regular teaching duties. In the third phase, qualifying teachers step onto the first of four "rungs" of the ladder.

Those teachers who qualify to "climb the ladder" choose from among five career tracks: (1) professional development, (2) curriculum, (3) community leadership, (4) educational technology, or (5) performance. They then are assigned activities or projects within their chosen tracks. These activities are carried out in addition to their regular full-time classroom duties. For example, a teacher choosing the curriculum track might direct a textbook selection committee, develop a preschool program, direct a curriculum study committee, or research curriculum innovations. A teacher focusing on educational technology might develop competency testing, improve testing by developing alternative ways of measuring student progress, or preview new software and provide information to all staff.

Toledo is an urban district, serving nearly 38,000 students. After three years of study, Toledo began its program in 1987. Aiming to increase the professionalization of teaching within the district, union representatives and administrators used components of a peer review intern/intervention plan already in place to create a career ladder. Total state dollars appropriated for fiscal year 1993 were $281,850; these funded salary increases for the program's 57 career ladder teachers. The district provided matching funds of $592,481 by funding the intern/intervention program.

Cincinnati. To attain its goal of providing teacher support and developing curriculum and leadership resources, Cincinnati's Career in Teaching Program provides opportunities for teachers to move through four sequential levels: Intern, Resident, Career, and Lead Teacher. Interns are first-year teachers; residents have less than eight years of experience and no tenure; and career teachers are those with tenure. Lead teachers may conduct peer appraisals of new teachers, mentor other teachers, facilitate new programs, head newly created curriculum and specialist councils, or serve as department chairs or elementary level leaders.

Cincinnati City School District is a large urban district serving a diverse student population of approximately 50,000. In 1985, the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers proposed an intern program to assist first-year teachers. This

idea was adopted in 1986. During 1988 and 1989, a joint union-administration committee drafted an additional, more elaborate, four-stage career ladder plan. This plan took effect in September 1991. In 1993, state contributions to the Career in Teaching Program totaled $234,900. The district matched the state contribution with money set aside by a teachers' contract settlement. State funds were spent for pay supplements for lead teachers.

Career Option

A career option program allows teachers to take on defined responsibilities related to the classroom. Teachers are compensated for participating, but increases in pay last only as long as the participation does.

Berea. Berea's career option program compensates experienced teachers for mentoring teachers with three years or less experience in that district. Currently, 24 teachers serve as mentors. Tenured teachers who are identified as needing intervention also receive "clinical supervision."

Berea City School District serves approximately 8,000 students in a suburban setting. In the early 1980s, educators in the district realized that in the next five to ten years they would be losing many teachers to retirement. To improve chances to recruit and retain quality teachers, a development committee of union members and administrators began to create a program in 1986. After researching and examining other career enhancement plans, they developed a career option program. In fiscal year 1993, the state contributed $45,789 to Berea's Consulting Teacher program, which the district matched with local funds. Money for the program was spent on supplemental pay for 24 mentors and for substitutes to cover their classrooms when release time was necessary.

Columbus. Columbus' career option program provides several different opportunities for experienced teachers. Currently, state funds directly support one of the components, the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. Classroom teachers are selected to become PAR consultants. They review and assist two groups of teachers--newly hired teachers and ineffective experienced teachers. Consultants observe or meet with each assisted teacher at least 20 times a year. PAR consultants may remain in this full-time position for a maximum of three years, and then must return to classroom teaching. Other options, currently supported by local funds, include becoming a competency-based education (CBE) consulting teacher, participating on a reform panel, or serving on the curriculum coordinating council.

The Columbus City School District serves a large, diverse student population of about 60,000. In 1987, the Columbus City School District merged several preexisting programs to create a career option program. Expenditures from state contributions to the Columbus career option program were $187,850 in fiscal year 1993. Most of the state funds paid salaries of PAR consultants. The district matched the funds with support of the CBE consulting teacher option.

Shared Governance

Shared governance activities promote school-level decision making, shared by administrators, teachers, parents, and community members.

Cleveland. Career Enhancement funds were used to support development of self-governance methods in the district. During the 1991 and 1992 school years, funds were used to support training in decision-making skills at 13 pilot sites and included expenditures for small training stipends for teachers, administrators, parents, and community members, as well as substitute coverage for teachers and administrators. Funds were also used to hire consultants to provide the training, and for the purchase of necessary materials and supplies.

Cleveland is Ohio's largest district, serving approximately 72,000 students. In 1990, the district received a commitment from both the Cleveland Board of Education and the Cleveland Teachers Union to pursue the development of a shared-governance and joint-decision-making model designed to benefit students, enhance community participation, and to increase the gratification professionals receive. In fiscal year 1993, Cleveland received $154,845 in state career enhancement funds, which they matched with $1.25 million in funds for peer review and $400,000 in staff development funds.

Merit Pay

A merit pay system awards bonuses or pay increases to teachers who have performed particularly well.

Arlington. In Arlington Local School District's merit pay program, teachers' pay levels are adjusted according to their scores on two evaluations conducted by their principals. Principals evaluate each participating teacher in the classroom twice a year and forward completed evaluation forms to the superintendent. The superintendent rank-orders scores and then uses the rankings to decide pay levels.

Arlington Local School District is a rural district in Hancock County, serving approximately 670 students. Because of the small size of the two schools in the district, most teachers are aware of each others' activities and opinions. Arlington developed a merit pay program to address the problem that its best teachers often leave to take employment in districts capable of offering higher salaries. School board members working in businesses that use merit pay proposed a merit pay program for the district. Members of the district's board of education worked with the superintendent and the teachers' union to design the merit pay program. Several teachers developed the forms used to evaluate teachers. In fiscal year 1993, the district matched each state dollar with four dollars of local funds, and spent a total of $147,983 to provide pay increases to all of its teachers.

Peer Review

Ohio's Plan for Phasing in Career Ladders describes the peer review process as using "teachers who have demonstrated mastery of the skills and the knowledge which is to be evaluated." A peer reviewer's duties may include determining a teacher's eligibility to participate in a program, identifying specific skills a teacher needs to improve, recommending continued employment of a beginning teacher, or providing one-to-one assistance to new and experienced teachers. Peer review uses teachers, rather than administrators, to evaluate and coach one another. Several programs have a particularly strong focus on peer review and assistance of new teachers. However, peer review processes are not applied only to new teachers. They are instrumental in decisions about advances on career ladders, and are used to assist experienced teachers identified as needing improvement.

Peer review is a component of all four state-funded career option and career ladder programs. A separate peer review program exists in one of those districts and the district that uses shared governance. There is no peer review process in the district using a merit pay program.

Reform Efforts and Career Enhancement

Ohio's career enhancement initiative included the features identified by research and other states' programs as leading to successful reform efforts:

- Changes result from local efforts.
- Design and implementation of new ideas involve teachers as participants.
- Any redesign of school structure or process acknowledges that school is a workplace for teachers, and supports ongoing development of teachers.

Approximately three fourths of respondents to LOEO's survey saw their districts' career enhancement programs as being the embodiment of school reform concepts. A teacher from a career ladder program asserted:

> Our...program is at the heart of our reform and restructuring efforts. The actual structure of our organizational chart has changed. We no longer have supervisors; those responsibilities have been taken over by lead teachers. Any committee that is looking at any kind of educational change in our system has a large number of lead teachers involved in [it].

CHAPTER III
PROGRAM EFFECTS

This chapter discusses the effects of career enhancement programs on teachers and students, and the advantages and disadvantages reported from each kind of program. It also examines the contributions that the peer review process made to career enhancement programs. The findings are reported in terms of advantages and disadvantages.

Each section of this chapter begins with a chart to summarize the overlapping effects and activities of the six different programs. The chart presents the information LOEO collected during interviews and surveys, and acknowledges the programs from which responses came. Further information about each item in the chart is contained in the subsequent text. The charts are consolidated in Exhibit 6.

ADVANTAGES

One of the premises of career enhancement programs is that changes in teachers bring about changes in student learning. Classroom changes resulting from career enhancement activities increased students' opportunities to learn. These changes included increasing the quality of teachers by retaining the best and releasing the least effective teachers; improving teachers' methods of instruction; and changing the focus of classroom activities. Increased opportunities to learn are reflected in improved student attitudes, better classroom test scores, and more frequent extracurricular activities.

EXHIBIT 2
OVERALL ADVANTAGES OF CAREER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS

	Career Options	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
The worst teachers are removed from the classroom	x	x	x	
The best teachers have incentives to remain in the classroom	x	x	x	x
Program activities improve skills and techniques of participating teachers	x	x	x	

Students had increased opportunities to learn, because the programs caused improvement in overall teacher quality. District administrators and survey respondents from all districts asserted that because of the career enhancement program, the overall quality of their teachers had improved. With the exception of merit pay, these programs had the effect of removing the worst teachers from the classroom.

In five districts, the worst teachers left because of the peer review process. According to LOEO survey respondents, peer review activities resulted in nonrenewal of contracts of ineffective teachers, including some with tenure, in five districts receiving career enhancement grants. According to an administrator, about two percent of all teachers being monitored and assisted never reach a skill level that will allow effective teaching, in spite of ample assistance. Their removal results in students no longer wasting years in their classrooms. A consulting teacher stated that, although recommending nonrenewal is difficult, it allows some new interns "to see that teaching may not be a wise career choice and they are free to make a new choice, before they have invested many years on the job, and before their poor teaching has affected many children."

Career enhancement programs offer the best teachers an incentive to remain in teaching and in the district. The best teachers are most able to motivate students and help them learn. Teachers and school administrators reported that program incentives included more pay, advancement opportunities, changes in responsibility, and professionalization of teaching.

Participants found **salary increases** a valuable form of recognition, as well as a financial incentive to work hard. One participant stated, "The biggest advantage has been the pay increase. If you have done well, you feel, let's say, recognized or appreciated."

Survey respondents discussed the advantages of having **advancement opportunities.** The possibility of an upward career move for the best teachers, said one principal, "helps attract and retain good teachers, keeping them in teaching as opposed to administration, and keeping them in the [district's] schools as opposed to another profession."

Participants, both peer reviewers and their mentees, noted a change in their perspectives of their classrooms and districts. One stated, "It rejuvenated me." Another said, "I see a bigger picture of the district, and of teaching. Working as a consultant gives a much broader picture than from just a classroom or school."

Program activities, such as staff training sessions, observation of other teachers, and peer review, improved the skills and techniques of participating teachers. These improved skills allowed teachers to increase student learning. Although tangible evidence of student learning is often difficult to produce, participants cited increased student test scores on both classroom and norm-referenced tests. For example, one recipient of consulting teacher services clearly linked changes he had made in his teaching to changes in student performance. He stated:

> I am doing things very differently now. I think the students learn more. I see a great improvement in the classroom test grades. I used the same tests several years in a row, and saw improvement in these scores. I just got back national [subject] test scores and they were great.

EXHIBIT 3
PROGRAM ADVANTAGES THAT AFFECT STUDENTS

	Career Option	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
Teachers rewarded for professional growth	x	x	x	x
Participation in university workshops or inservice sessions provided by the district	x	x	x	
Student activities to change attitudes		x	x	
Peer assistance in classroom management	x	x	x*	
Increased resources	x	x	x	
Increased sharing of ideas	x	x	x	
Observing other teachers	x	x	x*	
Self examination	x	x		
Change in curriculum or its focus	x	x	x	
Increased extracurricular activities	x	x	x	x

* These were reported as part of the peer review program supported by matching funds.

Expansion of teachers' perspectives, skills, and knowledge were cited frequently as effects of these programs. Each program promoted this **professional growth** in its own way.

For example, teachers in one program are rewarded for taking initiative to learn new skills. One teacher said, "The teachers at the top of the pay scale are now less likely to vegetate there. Instead, they are attending meetings, and are more likely to grow professionally."

Other career enhancement programs provide university **workshops** or require participants to prepare **inservice sessions**. This training helped participating teachers to diversify their teaching methods. Teachers reported that their students now receive more individual instruction; cooperative and group learning activities are more frequent; and students who might once have passively listened to a teacher lecture, and understood little, are engaged in hands-on activities that allow them to learn.

Teachers described program **activities that fostered attitude changes in students**, such as increased motivation and better discipline. For example, shared governance teams developed programs that encourage students to develop contracts to alter their behavior and to engage in dispute mediation.

In the peer review process, **experienced teachers counsel new teachers** intensely. A

consulting teacher stated that she has observed or counseled each first-year teacher at least 30 times this year. As one participant stated:

> Consulting teachers offer interns assistance and guidance, so that they are not thrown into a new situation with no help. New teachers are better able to concentrate on instruction, because they are getting assistance. They don't have to reinvent the wheel. They can ask for help and get tips and strategies and techniques for handling discipline problems.

Participants in the peer review process pointed out that being paired with an **experienced teacher provided new teachers with support** and an easily accessible source of information. One respondent said, "By being paired with someone to review their classroom management techniques and teaching strategies, the new teachers could use their best techniques and not waste a lot of student and teacher time trying to use unsuccessful ones."

Improvement in skills relating to **classroom management** resulted from peer review's consulting teacher/intern relationship. For example, a consulting teacher reported working with a teacher whose classroom was total chaos. The consulting teacher suggested providing "so much structure, so many activities, that the kids have no choice but to participate. The rules became 'you must be here by 10:00, your journal entry must be complete by 10:05, your reading must be finished by 10:20, etc.'" Lesson activities moved quickly, and grade penalties for not meeting the requirements were established. Within a short time, the classroom teacher had the skills to maintain order, and the discipline allowed subject matter not only to be presented, but to be learned.

Survey respondents described **an increased availability of resources** to individual teachers and their students. Program participants spent time procuring or creating equipment and written materials for science lab classes, literature reflecting a variety of cultures, and assistance with designing an advanced placement English course. Participants depicted this increased availability as particularly beneficial to new teachers.

Participating teachers reported an increase in **sharing ideas** and conferring. One consulting teacher described working with a new teacher. The consulting teacher shared ideas on classroom management, the intern shared how he used computers in the classroom, and both teachers changed their classroom practices.

Participants related changing their own teaching after **observing** that of others. One consulting teacher described a new teacher who had difficulty ensuring that all students were included in oral questioning. She suggested that the new teacher keep notecards for all students, containing records of her frequency of questioning them, and their success in answering. When she reviewed her own classroom techniques, she found them to be only moderately successful, and therefore followed her own advice and began to keep notecards in her classroom.

Reflection and **self-examination** of a teacher's own work were products of career enhancement programs. One experienced teacher described an unsuccessful attempt to enter his district's career ladder program, and the changes the process caused in his teaching. Throughout the year in which he was evaluated, eight different teachers each observed his classroom three times. After each of the 24 observations, he thought about his activities, and how he might improve them. Although he was not placed in a higher position, he feels the program is responsible for increasing his skills and development as a teacher.

Survey respondents noted that career enhancement programs facilitated district-wide changes in the **focus of classroom** activities. For example, in one district, program participants changed the focus of the literature curriculum, and students now study literature with a multicultural emphasis. In another district, consulting teachers helped develop consistency in curriculum focus among the district's classrooms.

Administrators and participants reported that career enhancement programs **increase extracurricular activities** offered to students. For example, career ladder teachers who focus on community relations offer after-school activities for both students and parents. Merit pay teachers are rated on their participation in parent organizations and for advising extracurricular activities, so more teachers now volunteer. The shared governance program encourages community involvement in its schools' management. Not only teachers and administrators, but parents and community members, appear on the governing team of each participating school in that district. Activities to assist high school students prepare for statewide proficiency testing were reported by administrators and survey participants. Respondents attributed increased success on proficiency tests to these activities.

EXHIBIT 4
PROGRAM ADVANTAGES FOR PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

	Career Option	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
Responsible for activities formerly only administrative	x	x	x	
Increased support, respect	x	x		x
Decisions about teacher employment, advancement	x	x	x*	x
Collaboration of teachers, administrators, union	x	x	x	x

* These were reported as part of the peer review program supported by matching funds.

Program activities also brought changes for teachers that did not necessarily affect students. These programs provided opportunities for advancement that changed teacher and principal responsibilities.

For teachers, some of these **new responsibilities** were activities that formerly were carried out only by administrators--evaluation of teachers, for example. Additional responsibilities--for example, curriculum development or department head activities--were previously assigned to experienced teachers, with neither formal criteria for their assignment nor reimbursement for the time spent on them. Program participants report sharing of these duties and responsibilities. Said a principal from a career option program, "It has spread out the

responsibility, as well as the talents of the people in the program. There is no way that the three administrators could do the outstanding job all the consulting teachers did with the professional growth option."

Teachers participating in career enhancement programs described **increased support** from their administrators for professional development activities. Participating teachers also noted increased respect of administrators and other teachers. Teachers whose participation brought financial gain reported a decrease in their resentment of teachers they perceived to be less capable, or less hardworking. Said one, "It has taken away resentment toward those who do not put in the same amount of time and energy but were paid the same as those who put in a great deal more time and effort."

Career enhancement programs allow teachers to **contribute to decisions** concerning teacher employment and advancement. Teachers are accountable to each other, and have greatly increased opportunities for professional growth. These programs give opportunities to teachers to become leaders.

Union representatives and administrators discussed the **collaboration** of district administrators, union representatives, and in some cases, school board members, to create these programs. Groups that often play antagonistic roles created programs that incorporated each group's goals and addressed each group's concerns. Thus, opposition to career enhancement activities was prevented. In addition, according to a program administrator, credibility of the programs was increased and few respondents felt as if career enhancement was a choice made without consideration of their needs.

Respondents called **increased accountability** for teachers an advantage. That is, teachers' actions and achievements in the classroom directly affected their opportunities for not only rewards, but in some cases, continued employment. This increased accountability resulted from increased wages for increased performance, or from the peer review process.

When teachers are accountable to or evaluated by other teachers, they view the process to be more valid than when it is done as an administrative review. The evaluating teachers have not been "away from the classroom," as principals often are perceived to be. Additionally, accountability is to the profession, not just to a supervisor. A teacher from a career option program summarized, "It has broken down the barriers of 'you against us, and us against you.'" Another stated, "Peer reviewers absolutely do a better job than administrators of evaluating and mentoring teachers. There is no way any one administrator can spend the time to master the needs of all different grade levels and subject matters of his teachers."

DISADVANTAGES

No career enhancement program was without disadvantages. Disadvantages were related to personal conflict, competition, administrative problems, inadequate or subjective evaluation criteria, indifference of nonparticipants, and problems of time management.

EXHIBIT 5
PROGRAM DISADVANTAGES

	Career Option	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
Getting high scores on the evaluation, instead of improving teaching, becomes the objective				x
Competition leads to personal feuds				x
Jealousy	x	x		x
Personal differences	x	x		x
Administrative problems				x
Inadequate or subjective evaluation criteria				x
Timing of fund dispersal	x	x		x
Nonparticipants' indifference	x	x		
Duration of program	x		x*	
Scheduling difficulties	x			

* These were reported as part of the peer review program supported by matching funds.

Conflict often resulted from the implementation of career enhancement programs. Educators from most districts responding to LOEO questions acknowledged several kinds of conflict as a disadvantage to their programs. These included nonparticipants' resentment of participants, dissension among teachers, changes in personal relationships, and jealousy.

Several merit pay respondents suggested that getting **higher scores** on evaluations, rather than improving day-to-day teaching, had **become the objective** of some teachers. They indicated that although merit pay programs had produced change, some of the changes were "cosmetic," produced only to impress an evaluator. One teacher stated, "The only observable changes are cosmetic changes. Some people who ignored

bulletin boards or lesson plans may do them now. But their teaching is the same."

Competition among teachers to achieve higher status in a program was identified as a disadvantage. One principal thought that this competition led to jealousy and personal feuds, and as a result, some teachers already performing at a low level now spent time looking for actions they could "tattle tale" about others, instead of improving their own teaching.

A teacher also related that prior to his district's program, teachers would often collaborate on arranging field trips. However, the collaboration ended when one of them secretly arranged a field trip for her class and did not include the children of other classes. Coordinating field trips was one of many activities necessary to be considered for advancement, and this particular teacher hoped to score higher than her colleagues.

Teachers who are not selected to receive rewards or recognition have feelings of **jealousy** toward those who are. One of the teachers whose performance has been recognized stated, "Some teachers are resentful that others get more. They think that all salaries should be higher. They think that if they just do their job, they should get paid more." A teacher's motives for change or improvement can be questioned. A teacher explained, "Within the staff, motives become suspect among peers. Any action makes me be suspected of 'brown-nosing.' I don't like volunteering, because other teachers think I am only doing it to look good."

Personal differences were mentioned as having been problematic in some programs. One consultant stated, "There is sometimes a personality conflict, which is not a system problem." Personal friendships can also hamper objectivity. A peer reviewer was assigned to assist a friend with whom he had worked for more than 15 years. He knew this person more than as a teacher recommended for intervention; he knew the teacher's family and he had spent leisure time with him. Although the peer assistance was successful and allowed the teacher to retain his job, the peer reviewer hopes he is never again assigned to monitor and assist a longtime friend.

Actions of some administrators have detracted from potential program benefits. In one district, an administrator shared the results of teacher evaluations with all district personnel. Disparity between evaluations of coworkers who had perceived themselves to be equal in performance contributed to conflict and friction. One respondent said this action . . .

> [C]aused a lot of dissension. We used to be a close-knit staff. But the first year of the program, the superintendent used the evaluations to rank-order the teachers, then announced the results. . . . Some really good teachers were quite angry that they were not rated as good as or better than their best friends.

Some administrators have found it difficult to accept the role of peer review in the evaluation process. Differences of opinion between an administrator and a consulting teacher about what actions a particular intern should take to improve performance led to confusion on the part of the intern and conflict among all concerned.

Indifference or lack of understanding by nonparticipants occurred in most programs. Teachers and principals not directly involved with career enhancement activities knew little about the programs. One principal returned a survey with a response of "Not involved, can't answer." In response to a survey in their own district, only about half of the district's teachers indicated interest in participating. In other districts, participants wished they had a better way to communicate about the program to nonparticipants.

Although participants stated that their new responsibilities resulted in increased support from their administrators, nonparticipants did not share participating teachers' views of a diminished "us-against-them" battle. When teachers assumed responsibilities once considered uniquely administrative, they reported occasionally being viewed by other teachers as part of "them" in this "us-against-them battle." A consulting teacher reported that experienced teachers equate referral to peer assistance "with the firing squad. They see us [consultants] as negative people who affect their livelihood."

Program administrators remarked that **timing of dispersal of state funds** is a disadvantage. One stated that often the district receives a check for a school year's program after payments to participants have been made. Another described the difficulty of receiving state money at the end of a school year for the preceding year's program.

Participants in the merit pay program cited **subjectivity of both the evaluation criteria and its application** to pay raises as a program disadvantage. For example, how the principal decided on the distinction between a rating of "outstanding" and "satisfactory" was questioned, particularly by those who had not received the "outstanding" rating. Several participants, including those who had been ranked high, stated that the superintendent uses the rankings as one of several factors in pay increases, and that there is no way to ensure objectivity.

Because of the relationship of the merit pay evaluation to the amount of a teacher's paycheck, it was difficult for principals to use the evaluations to help teachers improve. Said one principal, "We have four levels--Unsatisfactory, Growth Area, Satisfactory, or Outstanding. I feel all teachers have growth areas, even the best ones. But if I cite a growth area, it takes away money from the teacher." He explained that because his marking "growth area" decreased a teacher's paycheck, he was unlikely to do so.

Disadvantages relating to **time** were referred to as respondents spoke specifically about peer review. One teacher expressed sentiments about the duration of the program when she stated, "In some cases eight months is not enough time to help new teachers, especially those who come from education colleges that have not taught them the basics they need to know. If the program were extended for two years, the new teacher would receive a greater benefit." A teacher in the shared governance program disagreed. In his district, an intern has two years of assistance. He said:

> One of the disadvantages of peer review is that if you have a really bad new teacher, that teacher has two years in the system when they really should be let go in the first year. I can understand that the union is interested in giving the person a chance to pull it together and turn around in the second year. But, if they don't, we have spent another year with kids not getting a good education.

In one district, peer reviewers wished they had **more time with individual interns**. In that district, participants also mentioned scheduling difficulties. They commented that although a substitute was available for instances when they needed to be out of their classroom, they still had to prepare for the substitutes. A peer reviewer said, "We still struggle with how to have practicing teachers in the classroom teaching and also available to work with other professionals. Some of the lead teachers do not have enough time to assist the teachers."

In other career enhancement programs, teachers often continue carrying a full teaching load, and add the responsibilities of their program activities. A career ladder teacher who creates an inservice activity for other teachers

does so in addition to preparing for her daily class work. In a district where peer reviewers do not have full-time classrooms, a respondent stated that the best lead teachers may not want to spend three years away from teaching children.

A feature of one career option program was seen as an advantage by district administrators, yet a disadvantage by some participants. In this district, an individual teacher's position within the career option program lasts no longer than three years. This ensures that they will return to the classroom. It also allows the costs of the program to remain stable. If the positions (which increase teacher salaries by 20% of their scheduled salaries) were for longer than three years, costs for paying the participants would increase as their scheduled salaries increase. However, some participants anticipate difficulty returning to the relative isolation of the classroom. They also expressed anxiety about acceptance by other (nonparticipating) teachers as they resumed classroom duties, because of the perception of some teachers that peer review duties were administrative rather than teaching.

Respondents report an increase in evaluation-related work. One principal said that the evaluations he was required to do for the district program made a "lot more work for me. I spend less time helping teachers, more time splitting hairs, trying to make sure that my written subjective evaluation can be turned into a supposedly objective one."

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LOEO found that career enhancement programs improved the overall quality of teachers in participating districts. They provided incentives for the best teachers to remain in the district's classrooms, and increased the skills of participating teachers. Peer review assisted new teachers in developing classroom management techniques and allowed the least effective teachers to be removed from the classroom. Exhibit 6 summarizes our findings:

EXHIBIT 6
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE PROGRAMS

Overall Advantages of Career Enhancement Programs	Career Option	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
The worst teachers are removed from classroom	x	x	x	
The best teachers have incentives to remain in classroom	x	x	x	x
Program activities improve skills and techniques of participating teachers	x	x	x	
Program Advantages That Affect Students				
Teachers rewarded for professional growth	x	x	x	x
Participation in university workshops or inservice sessions provided by the district	x	x	x	
Student activities to change attitudes		x	x	
Peer assistance in classroom management	x	x	x*	
Increased resources	x	x	x	
Increased sharing of ideas	x	x	x	
Observing other teachers	x	x	x*	
Self examination	x	x		
Change in curriculum or its focus	x	x	x	
Increased extracurricular activities	x	x	x	x

EXHIBIT 6 (continued)

Program Advantages for Participating Teachers	Career Option	Career Ladder	Shared Governance	Merit Pay
Responsible for activities formerly only administrative	x	x	x	
Increased support, respect	x	x		x
Decisions about teacher employment, advancement	x	x	x*	x
Collaboration of teachers, administrators, union	x	x	x	x
Program Disadvantages				
Getting high scores on the evaluation, instead of improving teaching, becomes the objective				x
Competition leads to personal feuds				x
Jealousy	x	x		x
Personal differences	x	x		x
Administrative problems.		x		x
Inadequate or subjective evaluation criteria				x
Nonparticipants' indifference	x	x		
Duration of program	x		x*	
Scheduling difficulties	x			

* These were reported as part of the peer review program supported by matching funds.

Conclusions

Based upon interviews, surveys, and a review of the relevant literature, LOEO concludes that:

Career enhancement pilot programs have demonstrated success. They benefited participating teachers and their students. Each district designed its own career ladder, career option, shared governance, or merit pay program to meet its particular needs.

The advantages of career enhancement programs benefited students and teachers. Career enhancement programs benefited students by contributing to teachers' use of new skills in the classroom, giving the best teachers an incentive to remain in the district, and helping ineffective teachers to leave the profession.

Career enhancement programs also benefited teachers. High-performing teachers were rewarded with increased salaries, and in most cases, with increased responsibility, status, or respect. Teachers assumed leadership roles that were once solely administrative, such as evaluation and personnel decisions. Education reform efforts were enhanced by this professionalization of teachers' careers, which included increased accountability and collaboration of teachers, administrators, and the teachers' union.

Most disadvantages resulted from the way the program was implemented in a specific district rather than inherent problems in the program itself. Disadvantages, such as personality clashes, administrative problems, and jealousy resulted from the interaction of individuals. Other disadvantages included subjectivity of evaluation criteria and shortage of time to devote to the program activities.

The most promising strategies used by career enhancement programs are peer review and targeted staff development. The peer review process was identified as effectively removing the worst teachers from the classroom. Peer review also provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate and assist one another. Staff development that targets specific needs of a district's teachers allows them to acquire the skills they need to help their students learn.

The merit pay program gave its better teachers an incentive to stay in the district, by rewarding them for good evaluation scores with an increase in pay. However, the merit pay pilot program did not include activities to improve the skills of participants or a way to remove the least effective teachers. Its criteria for pay increases were subjective, and results of participants' evaluations did not remain confidential. These attributes detracted from the value of this pilot program.

Recommendations

LOEO recommends:

- **The General Assembly allow all districts who want career enhancement programs to compete for grant funds.** The success of six different programs has shown that career enhancement can be advantageous to participating districts. There is no need to continue testing the concepts of career enhancement in pilot projects. Districts with existing career enhancement programs and districts that wish to develop new ones should compete for line item funds.

  ODE would develop guidelines for distributing funds, based on financial need and the potential of proposed programs to affect both students and teachers. Districts would be strongly encouraged to include peer review and targeted staff development components in their plans. In addition, each plan would be required to include regular self-evaluation of both the program's implementation and results.

- **The Ohio Department of Education incorporate peer review and staff development targeting individual districts' needs into any statewide professional development plan it initiates.** Those activities should continue where they exist, and be incorporated into future professional development activities of other districts.

- **School districts that wish to use merit pay programs address the design and implementation flaws of the pilot program.** Redesign should ensure that the program's evaluation and reward process is objective and there are program activities to help teachers improve.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
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INTRODUCTION

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APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONS

March 25, 1994

1. Name _____
   Position _____
   School district _____
   Type of school (elementary, middle, high) _____
   Years in this position _____
   Years of teaching experience _____
   Have you participated in the (district) Program? ____ Yes ____No
   Phone number (for possible follow-up questions) _____

2. a. Have changes in instructional performance resulted from the (district) Program? If so, please describe them and give a specific example.
   b. Have changes in student activities or student performance resulted from the (district) Program? If so, please describe and give a specific example.

3. a. Have there been advantages to implementing the (district) Program? If so, use examples to explain.
   b. Have there been disadvantages to implementing the (district) Program? If so, use examples to explain.

4. Has the (district) Program affected you individually? If so, how?

5. Has the (district) Program contributed to reform or restructuring efforts in your district? If so, how?

6. a. Has peer review played a role in the (district) Program? If so, please describe it.
   b. What have been the advantages of peer review?
   c. What have been the disadvantages of peer review?
   d. What effect has peer review had on instructional performance?

7. If there is anything else about the (district) Program or career enhancement programs in general that you would like LOEO to know, please tell us.